

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1 to 13 (cancelled)

Insert the following new claims 14 to 53:

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14. (New) An earring for disengageable attachment to a user ear lobe that defines a first angle of separation ( $\alpha$ ) with respect to a sagittal plane of the user and which includes a hole defined through the ear lobe, said earring comprising:

a decorative ring suspendable from the user ear lobe, said decorative ring defining a mean plane of the ring and having a first end portion; and

an attachment portion depending from said first end portion of the decorative ring for captive insertion through the user ear lobe hole, said attachment portion comprising a unitary member having a first elongated substantially rectilinear portion extending at the first angle ( $\alpha$ ) relative to said first end portion of the decorative ring and a second elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said first elongated portion to form an angular return bend that defines a second angle ( $\beta$ ) between said first and second elongated portions of said unitary member so that, when the attachment portion unitary member is inserted through the ear lobe hole to suspend the decorative ring from the user ear lobe, said first elongated portion extends captively through the ear lobe hole such that the decorative ring mean plane lies substantially parallel to the user sagittal plane and said second elongated portion extends externally of the ear lobe to maintain the earring in selectively disengageable captive attachment to the user ear lobe.

15. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said first elongated portion extends in a direction out of the mean plane of the ring.

16. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein the ear lobe includes a surface disposed in confronting opposition to an adjacent cheek of the user, and wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is selected so that the second elongated portion extends closely adjacently along the ear lobe surface.

17. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is approximately  $90^\circ$ .

18. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said unitary member further comprises a third elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said second elongated portion to form a second angular bend that defines a third angle ( $\gamma$ ) between said second and third elongated portions of the unitary member, said second and third angles being selected so that a sum of said first, second and third angles is approximately  $180^\circ$ .

19. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 16, wherein said unitary member further comprises a third elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said second elongated portion to form a second angular bend that defines a third angle ( $\gamma$ ) between said second and third elongated portions of the unitary member, said third angle ( $\gamma$ ) being selected so that a sum of said first, second and third angles is approximately  $180^\circ$ .

20. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said unitary member further comprises a third elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said second elongated portion to form a second angular bend that defines a third angle ( $\gamma$ ) between said second and third elongated portions of the unitary member, said third angle ( $\gamma$ ) being selected so that said third elongated portion extends in a plane substantially parallel to said mean plane of the decorative ring.

21. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said unitary member further comprises a third elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said second elongated portion to form a second angular bend that defines a third angle ( $\gamma$ ) between said second and third elongated portions of the unitary member, said third angle ( $\gamma$ ) being selected so that said third elongated portion lies substantially in said mean plane of the decorative ring.


22. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said first angle ( $\alpha$ ) is in the range of approximately  $90^\circ$  to  $150^\circ$ .

23. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is in the range of approximately  $30^\circ$  to  $100^\circ$ .

24. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 18, wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is in the range of approximately  $30^\circ$  to  $100^\circ$ .

25. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said decorative ring further comprises a second end portion and a fastening means for detachable engagement with a free end of said unitary member remote from said decorative ring first end portion to thereby prevent unintended disengagement of the earring from the user ear lobe.

26. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 18, wherein said decorative ring further comprises a second end portion and a fastening means for detachable engagement with said third portion of the unitary member to thereby prevent unintended disengagement of the earring from the user ear lobe.



27. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 21, wherein said decorative ring further comprises a second end portion and a fastening means for detachable engagement with said third portion of the unitary member to thereby prevent unintended disengagement of the earring from the user ear lobe.

28. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 25, wherein said fastening means comprises a substantially hollow portion defined at said second end portion of the decorative ring for receiving in said hollow portion the free end of said unitary member.

29. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 26, wherein said fastening means comprises a substantially hollow portion defined at said second end portion of the decorative ring for receiving in said hollow portion the free end of said unitary member.

30. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 27, wherein said fastening means comprises a substantially hollow portion defined at said second end portion of the decorative ring for receiving in said hollow portion the free end of said unitary member.

31. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said first angle ( $\alpha$ ) is approximately  $135^\circ$ .

32. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 31, wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is approximately  $90^\circ$ .

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33. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein the earring further comprises a hinge that connects the unitary member to the first end portion of the decorative ring.

34. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 33, wherein said hinge is configured for enabling pivoted rotation of the unitary member relative to the decorative ring about an axis defined transverse to the mean plane of the decorative ring.

35. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 14, wherein said unitary member lies in a plane substantially transverse to the mean plane of the decorative ring.

36. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 18, wherein said unitary member lies in a plane substantially transverse to the mean plane of the decorative ring.

37. (New) An earring for disengageable attachment to a user ear lobe that defines a first angle of separation ( $\alpha$ ) with respect to a sagittal plane of the user and which includes a hole defined through the ear lobe, said earring comprising:

a decorative part suspendable from the user ear lobe, said decorative part defining a plane of suspension of the decorative part along which the decorative part is adapted to be suspended from the user ear lobe; and

an attachment portion depending from said decorative part for captive insertion through the user ear lobe hole, said attachment portion comprising a unitary member having a first elongated substantially rectilinear portion extending at the first angle ( $\alpha$ ) relative to suspension plane of the decorative part and a second elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said first elongated portion to form an angular return bend that defines a second angle ( $\beta$ ) between said first and second elongated portions of said unitary member so that, when the attachment portion unitary member is inserted through the ear lobe hole to suspend the decorative part from the user ear lobe, said first elongated portion extends captively through the ear lobe hole such that the decorative part suspension plane lies substantially parallel to the user sagittal plane and said second elongated portion extends externally of the ear lobe to maintain the earring in selectively disengageable captive attachment to the user ear lobe.

38. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said first elongated portion extends in a direction out of the suspension plane of the ring.

39. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein the ear lobe includes a surface disposed in confronting opposition to an adjacent cheek of the user, and wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is selected so that the second elongated portion extends closely adjacently along the ear lobe surface.

40. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is approximately  $90^\circ$ .

41. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said unitary member further comprises a third elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said second elongated portion to form a second angular bend that defines a third angle ( $\gamma$ ) between said second and third elongated portions of the unitary member, said second and third angles being selected so that a sum of said first, second and third angles is approximately  $180^\circ$ .

42. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 39, wherein said unitary member further comprises a third elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said second elongated portion to form a second angular bend that defines a third angle ( $\gamma$ ) between said second and third elongated portions of the unitary member, said third angle ( $\gamma$ ) being selected so that a sum of said first, second and third angles is approximately  $180^\circ$ .

43. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said unitary member further comprises a third elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said second elongated portion to form a second angular bend that defines a third angle ( $\gamma$ ) between

said second and third elongated portions of the unitary member, said third angle ( $\gamma$ ) being selected so that said third elongated portion extends in a plane substantially parallel to said suspension plane of the decorative part.

44. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said unitary member further comprises a third elongated substantially rectilinear portion connected to said second elongated portion to form a second angular bend that defines a third angle ( $\gamma$ ) between said second and third elongated portions of the unitary member, said third angle ( $\gamma$ ) being selected so that said third elongated portion lies substantially in said suspension plane of the decorative part.

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45. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said first angle ( $\alpha$ ) is in the range of approximately  $90^\circ$  to  $150^\circ$ .

46. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is in the range of approximately  $30^\circ$  to  $100^\circ$ .

47. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 41, wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is in the range of approximately  $30^\circ$  to  $100^\circ$ .

48. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said first angle ( $\alpha$ ) is approximately  $135^\circ$ .



49. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 48, wherein said second angle ( $\beta$ ) is approximately  $90^\circ$ .

50. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein the earring further comprises a hinge that connects the unitary member to the first end portion of the decorative part.

51. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 50, wherein said hinge is configured for enabling pivoted rotation of the unitary member relative to the decorative part about an axis defined transverse to the suspension plane of the decorative part.

52. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 37, wherein said unitary member lies in a plane substantially transverse to the suspension plane of the decorative part.

53. (New) An earring in accordance with claim 41, wherein said unitary member lies in a plane substantially transverse to the suspension plane of the decorative part.

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